

Minutes of Ad-Hoc Community Center Committee  
August 12, 2014, 7 pm  
Suffield Town Hall Lower Conference Room

Present:

Leeayn Burke, Beth Chafetz, Krystal Holmes, Wendy LaMontagne, Patrick McMahon, Joe Sangiovanni, Joanne Sullivan. John Ireland was present representing Silver Petrucelli and John Metzger of GPS Consulting. Beth Chafetz called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

No Public Comment Received. In addition no correspondence received.

Discussed TRC report on PCB and Lead findings in soil.

Doesn't seem to be a large concern, we will need to have TRC recommend the criteria for and level of abatement needed. The group agrees abatement will happen when renovation occurs. Krystal will get John Ireland a copy of reports, lead and asbestos for his file.

Discussed progress of needs assessment.

John Metzger of GPS Consulting stated a large cross section of individuals has been interviewed privately and a focus group has been conducted.

- The consensus from the focus group and interviews is that the best location for a community center is Bridge Street School.
- Individuals have identified the following needs for programs in town: more exercise programs like yoga, Zumba etc, more preschool age programs, programs for tweens, more education courses like CPR, dance, and sports programs for younger children.
- A need for a full size gym was identified.
- Discussed wanting a pool and although people want a pool they would like to get the community center first and then work on a project like that.

The next phase of John's report is to review the financials of P&R and work out revenue and expense projections for a business plan.

The group further discussed the need for a full size gym in town. Based on focus group and interviews a lack of gym space in town has been identified. Wendy stated the High School and Middle school are the only schools with full size gyms. The high school sport programs gets priority for gym space. Many different sports use the gym, basketball, volleyball, spring training for baseball, track and field as well as cheerleading, wrestling and lacrosse needs. There has been an increase in needs by private sports clubs for training, tournaments and games as well. So with the school teams, private clubs and P&R vying for gym space it is difficult to meet that demand.

Architect, John Ireland of Silver Petrucelli presented a comprehensive proposal of the options for Bridge Street School to be renovated into a useable community center.

Reviewed the history of the building/site, how it fits into the Town Village Plan. Conservation of the space would maintain the vision of the Town Center Village plan. There are historic rehab grants available.

- Option 1 – Renovate current space. Approx.. 16,000 sq. ft.
- Option 2 – Added a full size gym while maintaining current gym space as a large multipurpose room. Approx. 21,000 sq. ft
- Option 2A – Added full size gym in replacement of current gym space. Approximately 19,000 sq. ft.
- Option 3 – Demolition and new construction. Approximately 25,000 sq. ft.

Draft site plans and cost estimates were presented for all the above options. Estimates as presented included geothermal heating, catering grade kitchen, furnishings like tables, chairs etc., electronic gym partition, flooring, playground etc. The preliminary report was comprehensive of everything needed in the community center.

The goal for the next meeting will be to dissect the proposed estimates and find the best site plan to move forward with and finalize the associated costs. The group needs to identify which elements are needed in the center and the type of finished wanted.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Next Meeting is Thursday, September 4, 2014 at 7 pm, Suffield Town Hall, Lower Conference Room

Minutes prepared by Krystal Holmes